

SUSAN WILD
7TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

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COMMITTEE ON
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[HTTP://WILD.HOUSE.GOV](http://WILD.HOUSE.GOV)

September 16, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

Given the reported lack of progress in negotiations between the House, Senate, and White House for a new COVID-19 relief package, I am writing to express my deep concern on behalf of struggling constituents across my community.

From those constituents—of all backgrounds and political affiliations—I have heard consistent priorities. In meetings, phone calls, and correspondence to my office, they have conveyed to me the urgency of expanding federal unemployment assistance, substantially increasing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, providing robust funding to state and local governments—regardless of population size—so that they can continue operating vital services, delivering additional direct financial relief and emergency rental relief for struggling Americans, guaranteeing paid sick leave to all workers, and securing stronger workplace protections for frontline workers across our economy.

These constituents are not concerned with the issue of who is to blame for the impasse in negotiations. They are looking for leadership and relief on priorities which transcend politics and partisanship. For my constituents—regardless of background or political affiliation—these are fundamental issues that speak to their most basic needs.

Americans can no longer afford to wait for additional relief. Recent analysis has confirmed what I hear in my conversations with constituents: Following the success of the *CARES Act* and Congress' three other bipartisan relief packages in providing some emergency support to the most vulnerable members of our society, we are on the verge of seeing millions of our fellow citizens fall into major economic insecurity if Congress fails to act now. According to an estimate by Zach Parolin, from Columbia University, 17 million people across the United States would have fallen below the poverty line without the assistance provided by Congress. Now, these millions of families are teetering on the edge of disaster.

According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, around 10 percent of adults in the United States reported experiencing food insecurity in the last seven days in data compiled from August 19 to August 31—compared to an average of 3.7 percent of adults during the year 2019. For Black and Latino individuals, the post-COVID figures were even higher, at 19 and 17 percent, respectively. According to the same research, estimates of how many children across the United States are experiencing food insecurity rise as high as 14%. This growing scourge of hunger and food insecurity is unacceptable in the wealthiest country in the world, and we have a moral duty to prioritize expanding nutrition assistance.

On the housing crisis, while I am grateful for the extension of the federal moratorium on evictions which will avert immediate catastrophe for millions of Americans' facing the prospect of losing their homes, we must provide emergency rental assistance to ensure that renters and small landlords remain financially secure once the federal moratorium is lifted. In a sign of the scope of this crisis, 15 million Americans reported being behind on rent this past August.

When it comes to protecting the safety of frontline workers, we have seen the consequences of the current Administration's failure to protect workers on the job through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). According to the Lost On the Frontline project, more than 900 health workers nationwide have died from COVID-19 so far. In addition, teachers, transit workers, and meat processing workers, among others, have seen their health and safety systemically compromised on the job—without an effective response from federal agencies tasked with ensuring their safety. Congress must step in, deliver robust workplace protections, and ensure enforcement.

As you continue working to reach an agreement between both chambers and the White House, it is my sincere hope that the American people's interests will prevail against the forces of partisanship. I stand ready to assist in any way I can on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's 7th District.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. I look forward to working alongside you and all members of Congress—in both parties and both chambers—to protect the health and economic security of the American people in a spirit of urgency and cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susie Wicks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.